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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993

Review of travel and related entitlements for members of organs and subsidiary organs and staff members of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

1. Based on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), 1/ the General Assembly, by its decision 46/450 of 20 December 1991, relating to the standards of accommodation for air travel, requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its forty-seventh session, a "review/evaluation of the current system" together with specific proposals. In its decision, the Assembly also endorsed the observations made by ACABQ in its report on this item. 2/

2. The Advisory Committee called for a review which would "encompass all questions related to the travel of staff and representatives of Member States, including entitlements to first-class travel, with a view to formulating recommendations for a system which can be administered with flexibility and which eliminates existing anomalies". The Advisory Committee further proposed that the study take into account "practices elsewhere in the United Nations system with a view to achieving uniformity and consistency", as well as all previous relevant reports and resolutions.

3. In this connection, ACABQ recalled the review of the Secretary-General on travel and related travel entitlements of representatives attending United Nations meetings, submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-third session. 3/ Although the Assembly, in section IX of its resolution 43/217 of 21 December 1988, had decided to defer action on the issue addressed in the Secretary-General's above-cited report, the Committee believed that the information contained therein remained relevant. The Committee also expressed

the view that outstanding relevant issues remained with regard to removing inconsistencies in the payment of subsistence allowance to members of certain organs and subsidiary bodies.

4. In accordance with decision 46/450 of the General Assembly, a review was carried out of existing provisions for the payment of travel and subsistence expenses to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations and to staff members. In the light of the request of ACABQ that the review take into account practices elsewhere in the United Nations system, a questionnaire was sent to all specialized agencies of the United Nations and other intergovernmental agencies related to the United Nations. A shorter version of the questionnaire was also sent to a number of other intergovernmental organizations, as well as to all Member States of the Organization, through their permanent missions.

5. In this connection, the General Assembly may wish to note that efforts to achieve greater uniformity and consistency in the travel provisions applicable to staff members within the United Nations system are currently being made through the subsidiary structure of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). The issue of the standards of accommodation for air travel was discussed at the session of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions) (CCAQ (PER)) held in July 1992. CCAQ (PER) will give further consideration to this matter in 1993, on the basis of a compendium being prepared on current practices within the United Nations system. The General Assembly will no doubt wish to bear in mind the results of this review in considering any proposals on travel entitlements for United Nations staff.

6. It should also be noted that the preparation of reliable cost estimates relating to the various proposals under consideration for the travel of members of the Secretariat proved more difficult than expected. The necessary data cannot be readily extracted in sufficient detail from currently maintained expenditure records or statistics.

7. For the above reasons, it was considered advisable to postpone the submission of recommendations relating to the travel of staff members to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. A comprehensive report on this aspect of the present review will be submitted at that time, including an evaluation of the current provisions, with related proposals and their financial implications, as well as the results of the consideration of this issue within CCAQ (PER).

8. Consequently, the major part of the present report deals with issues relating to the travel of members of organs and subsidiary organs. These are discussed in section I. Section II addresses a specific anomaly in the present provisions which affects the travel of both members of organs and subsidiary organs and staff members.

I. TRAVEL OF MEMBERS OF ORGANS AND SUBSIDIARY ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

A. Legislative history

9. Over the years, numerous resolutions have been adopted by the General Assembly on the payment of travel and subsistence expenses to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations. These resolutions have focused on three principal issues: (a) the fundamental principles determining when travel expenses, or travel and subsistence expenses, may or may not be paid; (b) the identification of organs, subsidiary organs and individuals for whom travel expenses, or travel and subsistence expenses, are payable; and (c) since 1965, the class of accommodation for air travel. A number of resolutions have also dealt with the amount of subsistence allowance payable and the detailed rules governing such payment. A more detailed review of the legislative history is provided in annex I to the present report.

B. Current provisions

10. A consolidated statement of the currently applicable rules on the payment of travel and subsistence expenses to members of organs and subsidiary organs may be found in the Secretary-General's Bulletin ST/SGB/107/Rev.6, of 25 March 1991. The main provisions are summarized below.

11. Except as provided in paragraph 12 below, neither travel nor subsistence expenses are paid in respect of members of organs or subsidiary organs who serve as representatives of Governments, unless the resolution establishing the organ or subsidiary organ provides otherwise.

12. As an exception to the above principle, travel, but not subsistence expenses, is paid in the following cases:

(a) For not more than five representatives, including alternate representatives, of each Member State designated as a least developed country attending a regular session of the General Assembly;

(b) For one representative or alternate representative of the Member States referred to in subparagraph (a) above attending a special or special emergency session of the General Assembly;

(c) For one representative of each Member State participating in a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council or in a subcommission or subcommittee of a functional commission, where such representatives are nominated by their Governments in consultation with the Secretary-General and subsequently confirmed by the Council or where, in the case of representatives nominated directly by their Governments, the Council recommends and the General Assembly decides that such payments should be made;

(d) For one representative of each Member State participating in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

The subsidiary organs whose members are currently entitled to payment of travel expenses under paragraphs 12 (c) and (d) are listed in annex II.

13. Both travel and subsistence expenses are paid in the following cases:

(a) In respect of members of organs or subsidiary organs who serve as such in their individual capacity and not as representatives of Governments;

(b) In respect of individuals appointed by organs or subsidiary organs to undertake in their personal capacity the performance of special studies or other ad hoc tasks on behalf of the bodies involved;

(c) In respect of the following persons, regardless of whether they serve in their individual personal capacity or as representatives of Governments:

(i) The chairman or the rapporteur of a subsidiary organ who is called upon to present the report of such subsidiary organ to a parent organ;

(ii) One member of an organ or subsidiary organ serving as its designated representative at meetings of a second organ or subsidiary organ;

(iii) One representative of a Member State or one alternate participating in a subsidiary organ instituted by the General Assembly or by the Security Council that is required, by a decision of the parent organ, to work away from its assigned headquarters in the performance of a special task;

(iv) Members of the Board of Auditors.

The subsidiary organs whose members are currently entitled to payment of travel and subsistence expenses under paragraphs 13 (a) and (c) (iv) are listed in annex III.

14. Payment of travel expenses by the United Nations is limited to the cost of accommodation in economy class for journeys of less than nine hours, or in the class immediately below first class for journeys exceeding nine hours by air or its equivalent by recognized public transport via a direct route, except as indicated below. For one representative of each Member State designated as a least developed country attending regular, special or special emergency sessions of the General Assembly, the entitlement is first-class accommodation by air, irrespective of the duration of the journey. Furthermore, for all members of organs or subsidiary organs who serve in their individual capacity; for the individuals referred to in paragraph 13 (b) above; and for all permanent representatives of Member States accredited to the United Nations whenever they are invited to travel on official United

Nations business, the entitlement is the class immediately below first class by air, irrespective of the duration of the journey. Chairmen of intergovernmental committees whose travel is paid by the United Nations are also entitled to accommodation in the class immediately below first class, irrespective of the duration of the journey (see annex I, para. 10), even though this provision is not clearly reflected in the consolidated rules.

15. A daily subsistence allowance is payable to eligible members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, while attending meetings away from their normal place of residence or duty station, at rates equivalent to the standard travel subsistence allowance rates for officials of the Secretariat, plus 40 per cent. The allowance is paid only for the period during which a member's presence is required at the place of meeting, for those days in which the member attends regularly scheduled meetings.

C. Provisions in other United Nations organizations

16. As indicated in paragraph 4 above, a comprehensive questionnaire was sent to the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations related to the United Nations, in connection with the present review. A total of 14 (out of 16) responded in detail. Of these, four - the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) - have no provision for the payment of travel expenses, or travel and subsistence expenses, to members of the organs or subsidiary organs of their organization. The existing provisions in the remaining 10 organizations are summarized in annex IV to the present report.

17. It will be noted that, where they exist, travel entitlements for members of organs and subsidiary organs differ considerably from one organization to another and from those of the United Nations, particularly as regards the type of body for which travel expenses, or travel and subsistence expenses, are paid and the standard of accommodation for air travel. Notwithstanding the hopes expressed by ACABQ in proposing the present review (see para. 2 above), it will therefore not be possible, in the near future, to achieve uniformity and consistency in this respect by adapting the provisions of the United Nations to those of the specialized agencies and related organizations.

18. Worthy of note, however, is the fact that, aside from the United Nations, only one organization (the World Health Organization (WHO)) pays the travel expenses of members of delegations attending sessions of a legislative body comprised of the full membership of the organization. Furthermore, for members of some, if not all, organs and subsidiary organs, four organizations provide a higher standard of travel accommodation for journeys exceeding a specified number of hours. Of these, one (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) uses the same dividing line as the United Nations, i.e., nine hours, and three (the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) use five hours.

19. Two organizations (WHO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)) provide economy class accommodation for all travel by members of organs and subsidiary organs; another (the Universal Postal Union (UPU)) uses economy class, except for the chairmen of the bodies concerned, who are entitled to travel in first class. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) uses business class for all such travel, while the International Monetary Fund (IMF) provides business class accommodation when available, and economy class otherwise. The World Bank uses first class throughout.

D. Inconsistencies in current provisions

20. As indicated in paragraph 2 above, one of the main objectives of the present review is to identify anomalies in the current provisions for the payment of travel expenses, or travel and subsistence expenses, to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, and where appropriate, to formulate recommendations for their elimination. In addressing the issue of inconsistencies in the current provisions, however, it is useful to recall that the present entitlements represent carefully balanced compromises designed to resolve many considerations often conflicting with one another. The General Assembly may therefore decide, in some cases, not to eliminate an anomaly noted in the current provisions.

21. As noted in paragraphs 12 (a) and (b), payment of travel expenses for representatives of Member States attending sessions of the General Assembly is now limited to representatives from the least developed countries (also see annex I, para. 5). This restriction does not apply to any other organ or subsidiary organ, whether composed of government representatives or members participating in their individual capacity.

22. The General Assembly considered this issue at its forty-third session, on the basis of a report prepared by the Secretary-General at the request of ACABQ. 3/ In its related report, 4/ ACABQ endorsed the recommendation in the report of the Secretary-General that any eventual decision of the General Assembly to extend the above restriction in the payment of travel expenses to the subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should apply only to bodies whose members participated as representatives of their Governments. In its resolution 43/217 of 21 December 1988, the General Assembly decided to defer action on this matter. In its proposal for the present review, the Advisory Committee referred to the above study and noted that, in its opinion, the information contained therein remained relevant.

23. As an exception to the basic principles enunciated in paragraph 2 of resolution 1798 (XVII) of 11 December 1962 (see paras. 12 (a)-(d) above and annex I, paras. 5-7), the General Assembly decided that travel, but not subsistence expenses, would be paid to members of specified organs and

subsidiary organs serving as representatives of their Governments. The Committee for Programme Coordination (CPC) was not included among these. However, by paragraph 12 of its resolution 31/93 of 14 December 1976, the General Assembly decided, as a further special exception to the basic principles in resolution 1798 (XVII), that "in order to encourage Member States to be represented at a high level of expertise and to ensure the continuity of their representation", the Organization should pay both travel expenses, in economy class, and subsistence expenses, at the standard rate plus 15 per cent, for one representative of each Member State on CPC.

24. This provision was to apply from 1978 onwards, for an experimental period and subject to review by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session. By its resolution 38/227 B of 20 December 1983, the General Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council to consider the question and application of paragraph 12 of resolution 31/93 in the context of its review of the Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 1984/1 of 10 February 1984, the Economic and Social Council recommended to the General Assembly "the continuation of the current application of paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 31/93". The General Assembly did not revert to this matter and both travel expenses and subsistence allowance (at the standard rate plus 15 per cent) continue to be paid to members of CPC. It will be recalled, in this connection, that subsistence allowance is otherwise paid to members of organs and subsidiary organs at the standard rate plus 40 per cent.

25. As regards the standard of travel accommodation provided for high-ranking government representatives, it will be noted that, for one representative of each Member State designated as a least developed country attending regular, special or special emergency sessions of the General Assembly, the entitlement is first-class accommodation, irrespective of the duration of the journey. On the other hand, permanent representatives of Member States accredited to the United Nations are entitled to accommodation in the class immediately below first class, irrespective of the duration of the journey, whenever they are invited to travel on official United Nations business.

26. As indicated in section I B above, more liberal travel entitlements apply to members of organs and subsidiary organs serving in their individual capacity than to those attending as representatives of their Governments. Members serving in their individual capacity travel in the class immediately below first class, irrespective of the duration of the journey, and are paid a daily subsistence allowance; in the specified cases where the General Assembly has decided, as an exception, that payment should be made to members serving as representatives of their Governments, the standard of travel accommodation provided is economy class for journeys of less than nine hours, and the class immediately below first class for journeys exceeding nine hours. With the exception noted in paragraph 23 above, subsistence allowance is not payable to members serving as representatives of their Governments.

27. For the purpose of travel entitlements, individuals appointed by organs or subsidiary organs to undertake, in their personal capacity, the performance of special studies or other ad hoc tasks on behalf of the bodies involved (see para. 13 (b) above) are treated like members of organs and subsidiary organs serving in their individual capacity. Thus, they are entitled to payment of both travel and subsistence expenses and to accommodation in the class immediately below first class, irrespective of the duration of the journey. In contrast, the individuals identified in paragraph 13 (c) above, who are also paid both travel and subsistence expenses, are entiled to economy-class accommodation for journeys under nine hours and business-class accommodation for journeys exceeding nine hours.

28. As a consequence of the current provisions, a member of an organ or subsidiary organ could have different travel entitlements, depending on whether he or she was attending meetings of the organ or subsidiary organ, undertaking special studies or other ad hoc tasks in a personal capacity on behalf of the bodies involved or performing the functions described in paragraph 13 (c) above.

29. Thus, for attendance at meetings of the organ or subsidiary organ concerned, a member could be entitled to: (a) payment of neither travel nor subsistence expenses; (b) payment of travel expenses only, in economy-class accommodation for journeys under nine hours and business-class accommodation for journeys exceeding nine hours; or (c) payment of travel expenses in business-class accommodation, irrespective of the duration of the journey, as well as payment of subsistence expenses. On the other hand, for the performance of special studies or other ad hoc tasks in a personal capacity on behalf of the organ or subsidiary organ involved, the member would, in all cases, be entitled to payment of travel expenses in business-class accommodation and subsistence expenses. For the performance of the functions identified in paragraph 13 (c), the member would always be paid both travel and subsistence expenses, but the class of travel accommodation provided would vary. Members of organs and subsidiary organs serving in their individual capacity and permanent representatives of Member States accredited to the United Nations would travel in business class; others would travel in economy class for journeys up to nine hours, and business class for journeys exceeding nine hours.

E. Recommendations and options for remedial action

30. In the light of the observations in section I D above, the General Assembly may wish to consider the recommendations and options for remedial action described below.

31. By its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, the General Assembly agreed with the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations 5/ that the payment of travel expenses for representatives of Member States attending regular, special and special emergency sessions of the

General Assembly should be limited to representatives from the least developed countries (see paras. 12 (a) and (b), 21 and 22 above, and annex I, para. 5). The rationale for this decision would appear to be equally pertinent for other bodies composed of government representatives for whom travel expenses are payable. It would seem difficult to justify the continued payment of travel expenses for representatives of all Member States participating in these bodies. A case could be made, however, for selective assistance to those Member States which, without such help, would have difficulties in funding the travel expenses of their representatives in such bodies.

32. Since, as a rule, members of subsidiary organs participating in their personal capacity are not paid any kind of fee for their services, it would seem inappropriate to limit the payment of travel and subsistence expenses in such cases to members from the least developed countries. This position reflects the views previously expressed on this subject by the Secretary-General and ACABQ (see para. 22).

33. In the light of the preceding considerations, the General Assembly may wish to decide to limit the payment of travel expenses for representatives in subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to those from the least developed countries. It will be recalled that travel expenses for such bodies are paid only for those subsidiary bodies identified as exceptions by the General Assembly (see para. 12).

34. The list of Member States currently designated as least developed countries may be found in annex V. Annex VI provides information, for 1991 and 1992, on the number of least developed countries which are members of subsidiary bodies composed of government representatives for whom travel expenses are currently paid. Since the membership from the least developed countries varies from year to year, it is difficult to determine with any precision the savings which would result from a decision of the General Assembly along the lines of the proposal in the preceding paragraph. Nevertheless, based on the membership for 1991 and 1992, the anticipated savings can be estimated to be of the order of $670,000 per annum.

35. As regards the issue of the exceptional payment of travel and subsistence expenses to representatives of Member States in CPC, the General Assembly may wish to consider the following alternative courses of action, in the light of the general principles governing the payment of travel, or travel and subsistence expenses, to members of organs and subsidiary organs:

(a) Maintain the current practice, i.e., the exceptional payment to representatives in CPC of travel expenses, as well as subsistence allowance at a level equivalent to the standard allowance plus 15 per cent; or

(b) Discontinue the payment of travel and subsistence expenses for representatives in CPC; or

(c) Maintain the payment of travel expenses, but discontinue the payment of subsistence allowance for representatives in CPC;

(d) Maintain the payment of travel expenses and raise the subsistence allowance for representatives in CPC to a level equivalent to the standard daily subsistence allowance plus 40 per cent.

36. Alternative (b) would eliminate the exception relating to CPC, while alternative (c) would bring the travel entitlements of representatives in CPC in line with those of other bodies composed of government representatives for whom travel expenses are paid. Alternative (d) would maintain the exceptional payment of travel and subsistence expenses for representatives in CPC, but would put the level of the subsistence allowance payable on a par with that applicable to members of organs and subsidiary organs serving in their individual capacity.

37. Alternatives (b) and (c) would result in savings estimated at $172,000 and $112,000 per annum, respectively, whereas alternative (d) would give rise to additional expenditures of approximately $24,600 per annum.

38. Should the General Assembly decide to limit payment to representatives from the least developed countries, alternatives (b) and (c) would result in savings estimated at $20,600 and $13,400 per annum, respectively. The additional expenditure relating to alternative (d) would be reduced to approximately $2,900 per annum.

39. The anomalous situations described in paragraphs 25 to 29 reflect past judgements of the General Assembly as to the appropriate travel entitlements of members of organs and subsidiary organs under various circumstances. Whether the related provisions should now be revised is a matter to be determined by the General Assembly.

F. Other issues

Travel entitlements for representatives in functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council nominated directly by their Governments

40. As indicated in paragraph 12 (c) above, travel, but not subsistence, expenses are paid for representatives in functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, where such representatives are nominated by their Governments in consultation with the Secretary-General and subsequently confirmed by the Council or where, in the case of representatives nominated directly by their Governments, the Council recommends and the General Assembly decides that such payments should be made. Subject to the above conditions, travel expenses are also paid for representatives in subcommissions or subcommittees of functional commissions.

41. In the context of the present review, the General Assembly may wish to re-examine the exceptional payment of travel expenses which it previously authorized in respect of representatives in functional commissions, and subcommissions or subcommittees thereof, where such representatives are nominated directly by their Governments. Currently in that category are the

Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the newly created Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Although the Commission on Narcotic Drugs was established by the Economic and Social Council by its resolution 9 (I) of 16 February 1946, provision for the payment of travel expenses for representatives to this body was first made in General Assembly resolution 1075 (XI) of 7 December 1956. In the case of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, provision for the payment of travel expenses to representatives of participating States was made from the time of its establishment, by General Assembly resolution 46/235 of 13 April 1992, annex, paragraph 7 (a) (ii).

Travel entitlements for members of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

42. In the context of the current review, the General Assembly may wish to clarify an apparent ambiguity in the travel provisions adopted for the newly created Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. In paragraph 11 (b) of its resolution 46/152 of 18 December 1991, the General Assembly decided to establish the Commission "as a new functional commission of the Economic and Social Council". It will be recalled that members of functional commissions are entitled to payment of travel but not subsistence expenses, where such representatives are nominated by their Governments in consultation with the Secretary-General and subsequently confirmed by the Council or where, in the case of representatives nominated directly by their Governments, the Council recommends and the General Assembly decides that such payments should be made (see para. 12 (c) above).

43. However, resolution 46/152 does not provide for the members of the Commission to be nominated in consultation with the Secretary-General and confirmed by the Economic and Social Council, or for travel expenses to be paid to all members of the Commission. On the other hand, in an annex to the resolution, the General Assembly calls for provision to be made in the regular budget of the United Nations to defray the travel costs of the representatives of the least developed countries that are members of the Commission.

44. It is not entirely clear whether the General Assembly intended travel expenses to be paid to all members of the new Commission, as is the case for other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council under specified conditions, or whether it sought to limit payment to members from the least developed countries. It will be recalled that, in a related decision also adopted at its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly provided for payment of travel expenses for one representative of each Member State participating in the newly created Commission on Science and Technology for Development (see para. 41 above), the members of which are nominated directly by their Governments.

Exceptional travel assistance to representatives from the least developed and other developing countries

45. The guidance of the General Assembly is further requested with regard to the issue of exceptional assistance to the least developed and other developing countries to enable them to participate in meetings of bodies whose members are otherwise not entitled to payment of travel expenses. By its resolution 44/228 of 22 December 1989, the General Assembly established a voluntary fund to defray the travel expenses of representatives from the least developed and other developing countries participating in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Assembly established a similar voluntary fund for participation in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, by its resolution 45/212 of 21 December 1990. In this context, a contribution has also been received to facilitate the participation of Central and Eastern European countries in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. It should be noted that the rules governing the travel of members of organs and subsidiary organs also apply to travel funded by extrabudgetary resources.

46. The General Assembly has before it, at its current session, a report of the Secretary-General on the issue of granting travel assistance to the least developed and other developing countries that are members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). 6/ In its resolution 46/56 B of 9 December 1991, the General Assembly requested the Fifth Committee "to consider granting travel assistance, within existing resources, to the least developed countries that are members of the Commission, as well as, on an exceptional basis, to other developing countries that are members of the Commission at their request, in consultation with the Secretary-General". It should be noted that, since members of UNCITRAL participate in the Commission as representatives of their Governments, granting them travel assistance would constitute an exception to the basic principles established by the General Assembly (see para. 11 above, and annex I, paras. 3 and 4).

47. While addressing the issue of selective assistance to the representatives of Member States participating in UNCITRAL, the General Assembly may wish to establish guidelines for dealing with similar requests in the future. If the General Assembly were to authorize assistance for developing countries other than the least developed countries, criteria would need to be established for determining which countries would be eligible for assistance.

II. STANDARD OF TRAVEL ACCOMMODATION ON FLIGHTS WHICH DO NOT HAVE A BUSINESS CLASS

48. The current rules governing the travel of members of organs and subsidiary organs provide, in specified cases (see para. 14), for travel in "the class immediately below first class". Parallel provisions apply to staff members. Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General and, where applicable, their eligible family members, are entitled to accommodation

in "the class immediately below first class", irrespective of the duration of the journey. All other staff members, when travelling on official business and on appointment, transfer or separation, are provided with accommodation in economy class for journeys under nine hours, and in "the class immediately below first class" for journeys exceeding nine hours.

49. In the majority of cases, the provisions for travel in "the class immediately below first class" translates into an entitlement to business class for United Nations travellers (i.e., staff members or the individuals specified in para. 14). A problem arises, however, in the relatively few instances where aircrafts are configured so as to have only first class and economy class. In these circumstances, United Nations travellers who are entitled to travel in "the class immediately below first class", irrespective of the duration of the journey, are required to travel in economy class, even for flights of extended duration. This does not appear to have been the intent of resolution 42/214 of 21 December 1987, which established the entitlement to "the class immediately below first class". In appropriate cases, upon request, travel in first class has been approved in such circumstances as an exception. A further consequence of the absence of business class on certain flights is that United Nations travellers who are entitled to business-class accommodation for journeys exceeding nine hours are prevented from exercising this entitlement.

50. Should the General Assembly decide to regularize this situation, it may wish to give consideration to the establishment of additional rules applicable exclusively to flights which have only first-class and economy-class accommodation. The following proposal has been developed, bearing in mind the various General Assembly resolutions strictly limiting the use of first-class travel:

(a) United Nations travellers entitled to accommodation in "the class immediately below first class", irrespective of the duration of the journey, would be entitled to first-class accommodation on flights exceeding six and one-half hours. For shorter flights, the entitlement would be economy class;

(b) Other United Nations travellers would be required to travel in economy class, irrespective of the duration of the journey;

(c) The duration of the journey would be defined on the basis of published flight schedules and would not include time for travel to and from airports or time required for check-in and check-out formalities on departure and arrival.

51. A duration of six and one-half hours has been chosen as the dividing point in the above proposal, taking into account the prevailing unsatisfactory conditions in economy class. These are described in the report submitted by the Secretary-General on this subject at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. 7/ In particular, flights of longer duration in economy class are considered to affect adversely the traveller's ability to work at maximum capacity upon arrival. In view of these considerations, the Assembly

may wish to limit the application of the above proposal to travel undertaken in connection with official United Nations business and to exclude travel for other purposes.

52. Although it is difficult to provide reliable cost estimates pertaining to this proposal, it may be noted that relatively few international air routes are involved. The number of United Nations travellers concerned is also quite limited. Consequently, the additional expenditure which would result from the implementation of this proposal is not expected to be significant.

CONCLUSION

53. Information on the travel entitlements of members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations is provided in section I of the present report. As indicated in paragraph 7, the Secretary-General intends to submit to the General Assembly, at its forty-eighth session, a report on travel provisions for staff members.

54. In order to eliminate anomalies resulting from the current provisions, the General Assembly may wish to consider:

(a) The proposal in paragraph 33 concerning the possibility of limiting the payment of travel expenses to representatives of Member States from the least developed countries, with respect to subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council composed of government representatives for whom travel expenses are payable. Another possibility would be to pay travel expenses to representatives of the least developed countries participating in all subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (but not in subcommissions or subcommittees thereof);

(b) The proposal in paragraph 50 concerning the establishment of additional rules for flights which do not have a business class;

(c) The alternative courses of action described in paragraphs 35 and 36 regarding the exceptional travel provisions currently applicable to representatives in CPC.

55. The General Assembly may further wish:

(a) To examine its past decisions on the travel entitlements of representatives in functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council nominated directly by their Governments (see paras. 40 and 41);

(b) To provide clarification regarding the travel entitlements of members of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (see paras. 42-44);

(c) To address the issue of exceptional travel assistance to representatives from the least developed and other developing countries (see paras. 45-47).

Notes

1/ A/46/748, para. 9.

2/ Ibid., paras. 7-9.

3/ A/C.5/43/4 and Corr.1.

4/ A/43/7/Add.8, para. 8.

5/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/41/49).

6/ A/47/454.

7/ A/C.5/46/3/Add.2, paras. 4 and 5.

Annex I

TRAVEL ENTITLEMENTS OF MEMBERS OF ORGANS AND SUBSIDIARY ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS: LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

1. Some of the elements of the current provisions on the payment of travel and subsistence expenses to members of organs and subsidiary organs may be traced to the earliest days of the Organization. Noting that "the opportunities of Members to participate in the activities of the United Nations should be equalized as far as possible", the General Assembly, by its resolution 14 (I) of 13 February 1946, section 4.D, provided for payment, out of the budget of the Organization, of travel, but not subsistence expenses, for up to five representatives or alternates to and from meetings of the General Assembly. Similarly, provision for payment of travel, but not subsistence expenses, to members of commissions and subcommissions of the Economic and Social Council was first made in resolution 70 (I) of 19 November 1946.

2. The first general statement of the principles governing the payment of travel and subsistence expenses to members of organs and subsidiary organs was contained in General Assembly resolution 231 (III) of 8 October 1948, which provided in paragraph 5, that:

> "... neither travelling nor subsistence expenses shall be paid out of United Nations funds in respect of representatives to:
>
> "(a) Organs or subsidiary organs in continuous or virtually continuous sessions;
>
> "(b) Organs or subsidiary organs, the Members of which have a particular local interest in the region served".

Appendix A to the resolution introduced the distinction between members of organs and subsidiary organs participating as representatives of their Governments and members serving in a personal capacity.

3. The currently applicable principles are contained in paragraphs 2 (a) and (b) of General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII) of 11 December 1962, and are expressed as follows:

> "(a) Travel and subsistence expenses shall be paid in respect of members of organs and subsidiary organs who serve in an individual personal capacity and not as representatives of Governments;
>
> "(b) Except as provided in paragraph 3 below, neither travel nor subsistence expenses shall be paid in respect of members of organs or subsidiary organs who serve as representatives of Governments."

4. The resolution further stipulated that the above principles would apply to any organ or subsidiary organ established in the future, unless the resolution establishing the organ or subsidiary organ provided otherwise.

5. In paragraph 3 of resolution 1798 (XVII), the General Assembly decided that, as a special exception to the basic principle in paragraph 2 (b), travel, but not subsistence expenses, would be paid for up to five representatives or alternate representatives for each Member State attending regular sessions of the General Assembly, and one representative for each Member State in respect of special and special emergency sessions of the Assembly. Subsequently, based on a recommendation of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, the General Assembly, by its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 19 6, restricted such payments to representatives of Member States from the least developed countries.

6. Resolution 1798 (XVII), paragraph 3 (a) (ii) further provided that travel, but not subsistence expenses, would be paid:

> "In respect of one representative of each Member State participating in a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council or in a sub-commission or sub-committee of a functional commission, where such representatives are nominated by their Governments in consultation with the Secretary-General and subsequently confirmed by the Council or where, in the case of representatives nominated directly by their Governments, the Council recommends and the General Assembly decides that such payments should be made".

7. The above resolution also provided for such payments to be made in respect of one representative of each Member State participating in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, although the members of this Commission are nominated directly by their Governments without consultation with the Secretary-General and subsequent confirmation by the Council.

8. Paragraph 3 (b) of resolution 1798 (XVII) also provided for travel and subsistence expenses to be paid in respect of the following persons:

> "(i) The chairman or the rapporteur of a subsidiary organ who is called upon to present the report of such subsidiary organ to a parent organ;
>
> "(ii) One member of an organ or subsidiary organ serving as its designated representative at meetings of a second organ or subsidiary organ;
>
> "(iii) One representative of a Member State or one alternate participating in a subsidiary organ instituted by the General Assembly or the Security Council and which is required, by a decision of the parent organ, to work away from United Nations Headquarters in the performance of a special task".

9. Until 1966 all air travel paid by the Organization, whether for members of organs and subsidiary organs or for staff members, was by first class. In the light of improvements in air travel and bearing in mind the financial difficulties of the Organization, a/ the General Assembly, by its resolution 2128 (XX) of 21 December 1965, decided that the payment of travel expenses for members of organs and subsidiary organs would "in all cases, be limited to the cost of economy-class accommodation by air or its equivalent by recognized public transport via a direct route". The following year, the General Assembly, by its resolution 2245 (XXI) of 20 December 1966, confirmed that the normal standard of accommodation for air travel would be economy class, except that one representative of each Member State attending regular, special or special emergency sessions of the General Assembly and all persons serving in their individual capacity would be entitled to payment of first-class travel.

10. Further changes in the standard of accommodation for air travel were made in subsequent years. By its resolution 32/198 of 21 December 1977, the General Assembly restricted the entitlement to first-class travel for members of subsidiary organs serving in their personal capacity, to flights exceeding nine hours, including scheduled stops to change planes or refuel, but excluding travel time to and from airports. The so-called "nine-hour rule" was made applicable to chairmen of intergovernmental committees entitled to travel at the expense of the Organization. Ten years later, by its resolution 42/214 of 21 December 1987, the General Assembly reduced the standard of accommodation for air travel in respect of members of subsidiary organs serving in their personal capacity and chairmen of intergovernmental committees whose travel was paid by the United Nations to the class immediately below first class.

11. Based on a request made by the General Assembly in section XIII, of its resolution 45/248 A of 21 December 1990, the Secretary-General reviewed the rules governing the payment of travel and subsistence expenses to members of organs and subsidiary organs and revised them with effect from 1 January 1991, to provide for travel in the class immediately below first class for journeys exceeding nine hours. The standard of accommodation for air travel generally applicable for members of organs and subsidiary organs was thus brought in line with the provisions applicable to staff members. The rules were also revised with effect from 1 January 1991, to provide for travel in the class immediately below first class, irrespective of the duration of the journey, for permanent representatives of Member States accredited to the United Nations whenever they are invited to travel on official United Nations business.

12. The rules governing the payment of subsistence expenses have changed relatively infrequently. By General Assembly resolution 2491 (XXIII) of 21 December 1968, the rates of daily subsistence allowance payable to members of eligible organs and subsidiary organs were revised to a level equivalent to the standard daily subsistence allowance for officials of the Secretariat, plus 40 per cent, when they attend meetings away from their normal place of residence or duty station. Earlier provisions for payment of a daily allowance of $10 for meetings at the place of residence or duty station, and

$8 for days spent travelling by ship, airplane or train, were eliminated by the General Assembly in its resolutions 42/225 of 21 December 1987 and 43/217 of 21 December 1988, respectively.

Notes

a/ A/8900, paras. 7 and 10.

Annex II

SUBSIDIARY ORGANS WHOSE MEMBERS ARE ENTITLED TO PAYMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS a/

Commission for Social Development

Commission on Human Rights

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Commission on Science and Technology for Development b/

Commission on the Status of Women

Committee for Programme and Coordination

Population Commission

Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Statistical Commission

United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation

Notes

a/ In view of the outstanding questions regarding the entitlement to the payment of travel expenses of members of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (see paras. 42 to 44), this body has not been included in the above list.

b/ Established as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, on 13 April 1992, in replacement of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development and the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology for Development.

Annex III

SUBSIDIARY ORGANS WHOSE MEMBERS ARE ENTITLED TO PAYMENT OF TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES FOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Board of Auditors

Committee for Development Planning

Committee on Contributions

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Committee on Natural Resources a/

Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development b/

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women c/

Council of the United Nations University

Human Rights Committee c/

International Civil Service Commission

International Law Commission

International Narcotics Control Board

Investments Committee

Joint Inspection Unit

Meeting of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance

Scientific and Technical Committee on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

Special High-level Council for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

United Nations Administrative Tribunal

United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board and Committee (members appointed by the General Assembly)

United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (Committee of Actuaries)

Visiting missions to Trust Territories

Notes

a/ Established by General Assembly resolution 46/235 of 13 April 1992. Assumes the mandate of the former Committee on Natural Resources in respect of minerals and water resources.

b/ Established by General Assembly resolution 46/235 of 13 April 1992, in replacement of the former Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy. Also assumed the mandate of the former Committee on Natural Resources pertaining to energy.

c/ Body established by treaty.

Annex IV

TRAVEL ENTITLEMENTS OF MEMBERS OF ORGANS AND SUBSIDIARY ORGANS:
SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS IN OTHER UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS

		ILO a/	FAO a/	UNESCO a/	WHO a/	World Bank	IMF a/	UPU a/	ITU a/	WMO a/	IFAD a/
1.	Travel of government representatives										
(a)	Bodies composed of all States members of the organization										
(i)	Travel paid	No	No	No	Yes b/	No	No	No	No	No	No
(ii)	Standard of travel accommodation	-	-	-	Economy	-	-	-	-	-	-
(iii)	Travel and subsistence expenses paid	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
(iv)	Rate of subsistence allowance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(b)	Other bodies composed of government representatives										
(i)	Travel paid	c/	Yes	Yes d/	e/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
(ii)	Standard of travel accommodation	full economy; first if over five hours	Economy; business if over nine hours	Business; first if over five hours	e/	First	Economy; business if available	Economy f/	Economy; business if over five hours	-	Business
(iii)	Travel and subsistence expenses paid	c/	g/	Yes d/	e/	Yes	Yes	f/	Yes	No	Yes

/...

		ILO a/	FAO a/	UNESCO a/	WHO a/	World Bank	IMF a/	UPU a/	ITU a/	WMO a/	IFAD a/
(iv)	Rate of subsistence allowance	Standard plus 40 per cent	Standard plus 40 per cent	Standard plus 40 per cent plus $5	e/	Standard, with exceptions	Standard	f/	Standard plus 40 per cent plus $3	-	Standard plus 15 per cent
2.	Travel of members participating in their personal capacity										
(i)	Travel paid	c/	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	h/	No
(ii)	Standard of travel accommodation	Full economy	Economy; business if over nine hours	-	Economy	First	Economy; business if available	-	-	h/	-
(iii)	Travel and subsistence expenses paid	c/	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	h/	No
(iv)	Rate of subsistence allowance	Standard plus 20 per cent	Standard	-	Standard plus 40 per cent	Standard or two other options	Standard	-	-	h/	-

(Footnotes on following page)

(Footnotes to table)

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a/ International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Universal Postal Union (UPU), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

b/ World Health Assembly.

c/ Yes, for employer and worker members; no, for government members.

d For members of UNESCO's Executive Board. At its twenty-sixth session (1991), the UNESCO General Conference decided that the Executive Board would henceforth be composed of member States, rather than persons elected in their individual capacity, as in the past. As a transitional measure, it was decided that this change would be implemented following the twenty-seventh session (1993) of the General Conference. All current members of the Executive Board therefore participate in their personal capacity.

e/ Representatives of member States who contribute to the budget of the organization at the minimum rate are paid travel expenses in economy class to attend meetings of the regional committees. Subsistence allowance is paid only for attendance at meetings of the Executive Board, at the standard rate plus 40 per cent.

f/ The chairmen of the Executive Council and the Consultative Committee for Postal Studies are entitled to travel in first class; they are also paid a daily subsistence allowance at the standard rate plus 40 per cent. Other members are not entitled to payment of subsistence expenses.

g/ Yes, for members of the Finance and Programme Committee; no, for members of the Council.

h/ Members of the WMO Executive Council and its subsidiary bodies are entitled to payment of either travel expenses in economy class, or subsistence allowance at the standard rate. As an exception, however, both travel (in economy class) and subsistence expenses (at the standard rate) may be paid to members of the Executive Council from the least developed countries, at the latter's request. WHO pays both travel expenses (in economy class) and daily subsistence allowance (at the standard rate) for experts who serve as members of subsidiary committees of the governing bodies.

Annex V

CURRENT LIST OF LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES a/

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Benin
Bhutan
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cambodia
Cape Verde
Central African Republic
Chad
Comoros
Djibouti
Equatorial Guinea
Ethiopia
Gambia
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Haiti
Kiribati b/
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Lesotho
Liberia
Madagascar
Malawi
Maldives
Mali
Mauritania
Mozambique
Myanmar
Nepal
Niger
Rwanda
Samoa
Sao Tome and Principe
Sierra Leone
Solomon Islands
Somalia
Sudan
Togo
Tuvalu b/
Uganda
United Republic of Tanzania
Vanuatu
Yemen
Zaire
Zambia

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a/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 7 (E/1992/27), annex II.

b/ States not Members of the United Nations.

Annex VI

PARTICIPATION FROM THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES IN THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL COMPOSED OF GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES, WHOSE MEMBERS ARE ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS a/

Subsidiary	Membership	Members designated as least developed countries	
		1991	1992
Commission for Social Development	32	6	5
Commission on Human Rights	53	8	8
Commission on Narcotic Drugs	53		
Commission on Science and Technology for Development b/	53	0	0
Commission on the Status of Women	45	8	8
Committee for Programme and Coordination	34	4	3
Population Commission	27	6	7
Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories	3	0	0
Statistical Commission	24	2	2
United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation	21	0	0

a/ In view of the outstanding questions regarding the entitlement to the payment of travel expenses of members of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (see paras. 42 to 44), this body has not been included in the above list.

b/ Established as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, on 13 April 1992, in replacement of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development and the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology for Development.